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ABSTRACT

Preventing the use of alcohol and other drugs by young people is a critical issue for all Americans. This action guide is designed to help communities create programs that prevent the tragedies caused by underage drinking. It is intended as a tool that communities can use to create a broad-based public education program in which they can communicate to residents the seriousness of the teen drinking problem and motivate them to become part of the solution. It is hoped that participating communities will be able to increase the number of youths who understand the physical and psychological risks of alcohol. The guide provides an overview of the teen drinking problem and then explains how a community can begin to initiate changes in their neighborhoods. Outlined are ways to conduct a community risk assessment, strategies for actions, and how to alter community norms. Since raising public awareness is a large component of the program, the guide offers advice on how to involve the news media and how to target messages and audiences. Suggestions on special events and on developing an evaluation plan are also presented. (RJM)

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Teen Drinking Prevention Program

Community Action Guide

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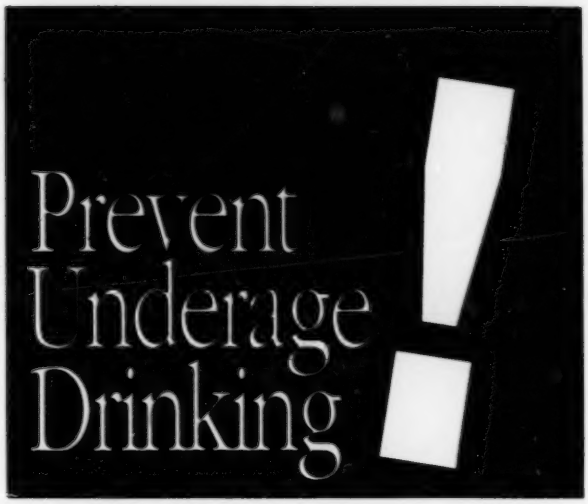
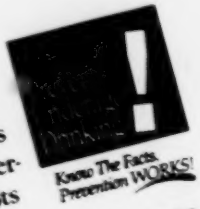


Know The Facts.
Prevention WORKS!

Message From the Director



Alcohol-related incidents are the leading cause of death and injury among young people in America today. Teen drinking is a serious problem with numerous causes and consequences. Your involvement in preventing underage drinking will help your community build a grassroots coalition to challenge and change those standards, norms, and misinformation that make it too easy for too many teens to drink too much—so often with frightening consequences.

The CSAP Teen Drinking Prevention Program is based on innovative public health techniques and has four objectives:

- Raising public awareness of the underage drinking crisis.
- Changing community norms that encourage underage drinking.
- Creating community-specific prevention messages and materials.
- Ensuring that special events in a community encourage healthy lifestyle choices.

This *Community Action Guide* is designed to assist you and your community in becoming part of SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention's (CSAP) national effort to prevent underage drinking.

This guide will help you create a broad-based public education program to communicate to community members the seriousness of the teen drinking problem and to motivate them to become part of the solution.

My thanks in advance for your participation.

Elaine M. Johnson, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Table of Contents

Introduction 3

Overview of the Teen Drinking Problem 4

Eight Young People Die Each Day in Alcohol-Related Crashes 4

Getting Started 5

Why Create a Teen Drinking Prevention Program? 5

The Problem of Mixed Messages 5

Prevention Strategies and Activities 5

Conducting a Community Risk Assessment 6

Know Your Community's Risk Factors 6

Strategies for Action 7

Building Community Networks 7

Changing Community Norms 9

Changing Factors That Encourage Underage Drinking 9

Examples of Negative Norms 10

Raising Public Awareness 12

Increasing the Community's Knowledge of the Underage Drinking Problem 12

News Media Can Play a Large Role in Delivering Your Message 13

Making Contact With Reporters and Editors 13

News Conferences 14

Preparing for the Role of Media Spokesperson 14

Targeting Messages and Audiences, Selecting Media Outlets, and Building Media Lists 14

Public Service Announcements 15

Summing Up 15

Special Events 17

Identify a Community Event 18

Developing an Evaluation Plan 19

CSAP Support Materials 20

The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention's (CSAP) Teen Drinking Prevention Program is a comprehensive effort to provide tools and assistance to communities interested in establishing teen drinking prevention and health communication programs at the grassroots level.

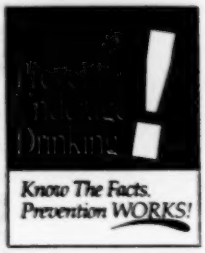
Those participating in the CSAP Teen Drinking Prevention Program will create communitywide networks and undertake targeted communications programs in an effort to identify and change those community norms or standards that encourage underage drinking–drinking under the legal age of 21. Participating communities will also attempt to increase the number of youths who understand the physical and psychological risks of alcohol and to arm these young people with the knowledge and skills to resist the influence to drink that they get from peers and media messages.

Preventing the use of alcohol and other drugs by young people is a critical issue for all American communities. The statistics concerning underage drinking are alarming, and the consequences of this consumption are all too often tragic. Alcohol use by young people leads to injury, drowning, unplanned sexual activity, and criminal activity and victimization in unparalleled numbers. Alcohol has been identified as a leading problem in schools today, and alcohol-related traffic fatalities claim many young lives. In short, underage drinking makes our schools less effective, our highways less safe, and our futures less certain.

This *Community Action Guide* is designed to help communities create programs to prevent the tragedies that underage drinking can cause. It's an issue that demands our attention and action! The solution lies at the grassroots level where all members of a community can work together to create healthy environments for the young and old alike.

Your Goal

The primary goal of the program is to help communities create protective environments in which today's youth can safely reach adulthood. The program is designed to deliver a no-use message to teenagers and advocate healthy environments and lifestyles to entire communities.



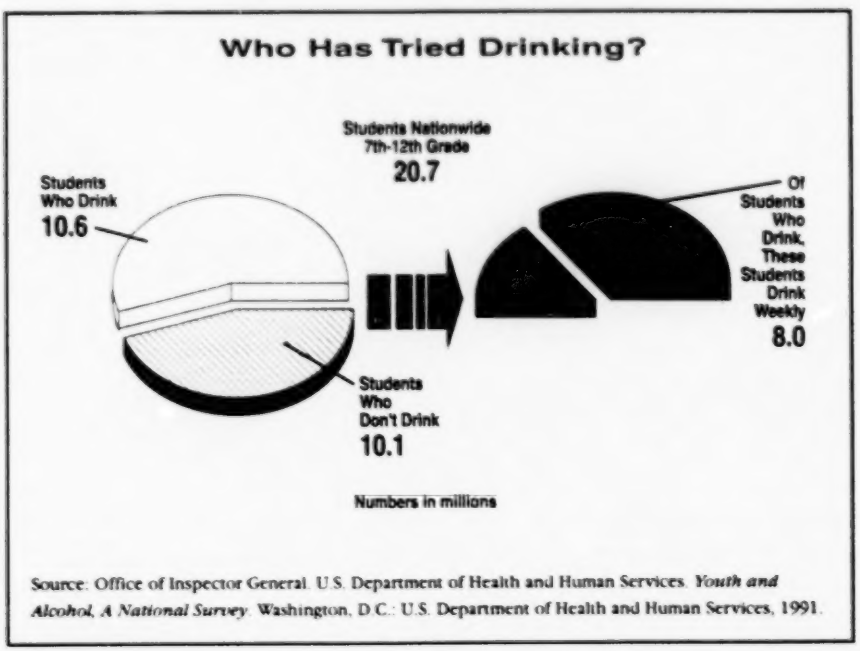
Eight Young People Die Each Day in Alcohol-Related Crashes

The statistics are frightening. Think of the eight young people who are closest to you: your own children, nieces, nephews, and family friends. Today and every day across the country, eight young people—perhaps much like some you know and love—will die in alcohol-related vehicular crashes.

A 1993 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) series of reports on underage drinking documented that at least 10 million American teenagers drink monthly, 8 million drink weekly, and almost .5 million go on weekly drinking binges of five or more drinks in a row. The series also revealed that most teenagers are able to purchase alcohol without being asked for proper identification despite the fact that the purchase and possession of alcohol by persons under 21 is illegal in all 50 States.

Furthermore, teenagers understand very little about alcohol and the dangers of its consumption. Another DHHS study found that two out of three students could not distinguish alcoholic from nonalcoholic beverages based on their labeling and packaging.

Alcohol is one of the most widely available and problem-producing drugs available today. Alcohol is the drug of choice for our young people, and they consume it earlier and earlier. This early drinking, sometimes beginning in children as young as 11 or 12, is of particular concern because research has shown that people who begin to use alcohol early in their teens are more likely to experience serious alcohol-related and health problems later in life.



Source: Office of Inspector General. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Youth and Alcohol, A National Survey*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1991.

Why Create a Teen Drinking Prevention Program?

As you have read, underage drinking is a serious national problem with many causes and no simple solution. What is clear, however, is that the epidemic of youth drinking is occurring across geographic, racial, and ethnic boundaries. It is a problem in all American communities. A lasting solution will require that these communities build broad networks of prevention partners. And a lasting solution will require that communities identify and change those norms that encourage underage drinking and thus help create healthy environments in which young people can grow.

The Problem of Mixed Messages

The environment in which we grow, live, and work affects each of us. All communities have norms, or standard behaviors, which are those actions we expect of others and copy ourselves. Unfortunately, some norms or learned behaviors can be detrimental to our health and safety–like too much alcohol or, in the case of young people, any alcohol at all.

Part of your involvement in the Teen Drinking Prevention Program will require self-assessment and analysis. Each community must look at itself and analyze the messages, behaviors, and standards it promotes or tolerates. What are these behaviors saying to young people about drinking?

The media play a persuasive role in each of our lives. Their reach is wide and powerful. The commercials that our children see on TV and the actions of TV and movie stars are all part of the environment that influences the choices of young people.

We hope you recognize the important role the environment plays in encouraging underage drinking. Also, community norms strongly influence our behavior and that of young people, who want to "fit in" and be accepted.

Read on. You will see how your community can mobilize to identify and change those community norms that are allowing, even encouraging youth to drink.

Prevention Strategies and Activities

Young people drink for many reasons: to fit in with the crowd, to feel grown up, or to cope with their feelings. There are, however, several "protective" strategies that can help foster healthy behavior in our young people.

Your community should strive to

- Present a clear no-use message in the family, the community, and the media.
- Identify specific community norms or factors that permit or encourage teen drinking, rather than discourage it, and target your efforts toward changing those norms.
- Provide prevention programs for young people at early ages.
- Build communitywide networks to create well-coordinated prevention programs with many working partners.
- Provide young people with the real facts about the dangers of drinking and with the ability to resist the pressure to drink that they receive from their peers and through advertising.
- Educate parents and other adults about the warning signs of alcohol use by children, the effects of their own alcohol use on a child's behavior, and where to go for help if needed.
- Inform citizens of the seriousness of underage drinking and motivate them to change those community norms that assist rather than discourage teen drinking.

Know Your Community's Risk Factors

Although the teen drinking crisis appears to be a part of all communities across the country, no two communities are entirely alike. Each community has its unique mix of people, media, organizations, norms, and patterns of alcohol use by young people.

Knowing your community's risk factors is the single most critical element in planning your campaign. A risk assessment will help you determine the nature and extent of the underage drinking problem in your community and will also help you identify important allies and outlets for your message.

A Community Risk Assessment* involves a systematic method of collecting information about your community from a range of sources. Your risk assessment should include a thorough look at your community's population, government, social service agencies and policies, laws and law enforcement, advertising, alcohol sales and promotional practices, businesses, religious communities, media, and educational resources. It should additionally identify opinion leaders in every "community" within your community.

Conducting a risk assessment will allow you to specifically identify the factors that encourage or contribute to teen drinking in your community. Your assessment will also help you identify current prevention efforts and will suggest strategies that are appropriate for the community.

This information should be gathered from a wide variety of sources, as varied as your community. Information can be collected through informal methods, such as talking to colleagues, neigh-

Questions Your Risk Assessment Should Answer

❒ Who are the opinion leaders and influences in your community?

❒ What are your community's demographics—the racial/ethnic, age, educational, and economic makeup of your community and its subcommunities?

❒ What resources are available within the community—social service organizations, government agencies and programs, the religious community, volunteer organizations, and so on?

❒ What is the extent of underage drinking in the community? When and where does it take place?

❒ What messages do young people within your community receive concerning alcohol from the media, advertising, enforcement officials, businesses, clubs, their peers, and so forth?

❒ Which young people are using alcohol and under what circumstances? Where do they get alcohol? What are some of the causes of their drinking—mixed messages, boredom, pressure?

❒ What are the consequences of youth alcohol consumption for the young people and for the community?

❒ What prevention efforts are currently under way in the community, and what are their successes or failures?

❒ Is alcohol education part of the curriculum in your community's school system beginning at the elementary level?

❒ Is enforcing the 21-year-old drinking age a priority for your local police force? Does the community support the police in their efforts to enforce the drinking age?

❒ What are parental attitudes toward alcohol in your community? Is alcohol considered a "safe" alternative to other drug use?

❒ What happens to vendors who sell alcohol to minors?

❒ What happens to minors who purchase alcohol? Is the infraction taken seriously?

❒ How is alcohol marketed in your community? Are young people the target of any of this marketing?

*For a copy of a sample community opinionnaire and audit as well as more information on conducting community risk assessments, refer to the Community Risk Assessment Guide.

bors, friends, and so on, or through more formal means, such as surveys and questionnaires. Studying existing data, such as census results or statistics collected by local schools or social service or enforcement agencies, may also prove helpful. A combination of all three methods is probably best.

Building Community Networks

The success of your local effort will depend in large part on your ability to build a communitywide effort to tackle the underage drinking problem. "Network" is a word that is often overused, but it fits well here. What you are attempting to do is build a network of community leaders, organizations, and resources united in the mutual goal of changing those community norms that encourage underage drinking. In building such a network, you will be multiplying your voice in a way that will be difficult for the rest of the community to ignore. Your network can also be part of an already existing organization.

Building a communitywide network of organizations can...

- ❒ Increase the relevance, quality, availability, and usefulness of teen drinking prevention information to specific target groups.
- ❒ Gain greater visibility for the Teen Drinking Prevention Program through increased public and target audience promotional campaigns and information dissemination activities.
- ❒ Improve coordination among all agencies and organizations concerned about youth drinking.
- ❒ Greatly expand your resource base.

Begin by knowing what's going on in your community. Stay alert to community bulletin boards and attend community meetings and forums. Learn who the key people are, the community leaders and volunteers.

It will be critical to ensure that all segments of your community are represented in your network in order to bring the network's message to the community and the resources of the community to the network.

Identify such people as...

- ❒ Community gatekeepers such as clergy, respected elders, elected officials, and the like.
- ❒ Leaders of organizations.
- ❒ Business leaders and local merchants.
- ❒ City council members.
- ❒ Educators, school officials, and school board members.
- ❒ Local committee members.
- ❒ Neighborhood organization leaders/officials.
- ❒ Active citizens.
- ❒ Youth leaders of all types.
- ❒ People who make change happen.

Recruitment will be ongoing and extremely important because the membership of a network will change. Be a recruiter at all times. Be on the lookout for organizations that can act as intermediaries between the no-use message and the community. Such organizations can provide access to their members, employees, clients, and so on. They also may have resources that they can lend to the effort. Working with highly visible intermediaries within the local power structure often enhances your program's credibility.

Network members can...

- ❒ Provide each other with technical assistance and expertise.
- ❒ Coordinate joint services and projects.
- ❒ Create a strong advocacy voice.

Your communitywide network will allow you to take advantage of numerous intermediary marketing channels. These channels could be a newsletter, closed-circuit television, electronic bulletin board, paycheck stuffer, or monthly magazine. Members also can share information and resources. Aim to be broad based and task oriented, and to share a common understanding of purpose. Ensuring clear communication and a definition of roles and assignments will be critical.

Steps for Building Community Networks

- ❒ Identify potential network partners.
- ❒ Create your sales pitch—why should these potential partners join the underage drinking prevention effort?
- ❒ Invite each partner to participate by letter and, if possible, by personal visit.
- ❒ Once members are signed on, carefully plan the role that each can play to spread the no-use message. Take advantage of the organization's natural strengths in terms of audience and ongoing communication tools.
- ❒ Keep the members informed and motivated. Share success stories and "thank yous."
- ❒ Be open to suggestions from the members.
- ❒ Include youth organizations and youth leaders!

Changing Factors That Encourage Underage Drinking

The CSAP Teen Drinking Prevention Program is unique in its focus on changing environmental factors that encourage underage drinking. Instead of attempting to foster behavioral changes in young people directly, this program attempts to influence the choices of young people by shaping the environment in which they live.

Many public health advocates today believe that it is very difficult for individuals to change their behavior when they are surrounded by social, cultural, and physical environmental factors that work against that change. In the long run, it is simply more productive to change environmental factors—like the availability of alcohol—than to change individual behaviors.

Fostering this environmental change will be the most critical part of your local campaign. To be successful, you must have a complete understanding of the role of community norms and environmental factors that encourage teen drinking.

Alcohol and other drug problems within a community do not happen without cause. Societal norms and influences within the community affect each of us. These behavioral expectations have an even stronger effect on young people, who are often testing boundaries and striving to fit in. A young person's environment and the norms of his or her family, extended family, and community strongly influence his or her decision to use or not use alcohol. These influences include but are not limited to the example set by parents, peers, school policy, law enforcement policy, religious institutions, cultural traditions, the mass media, industry advertising, and marketing practices.

Collectively, all members of a community set standards for expected and acceptable behavior. These standards or norms exist in every community for nearly every behavior, including alcohol and other drug use.

To wage a successful prevention campaign, each community will have to take a critical look at itself and its norms. Begin this process by answering a few basic questions:

❒ When alcohol is served in your home, is a nonalcoholic alternative also offered?

❒ Are underaged youth served alcohol in your home and in establishments you visit?

❒ Is the 21-year-old drinking age strictly enforced within your community, or do vendors and enforcement officials look the other way?

❒ Is your local police force supported in its efforts to enforce the drinking age?

❒ Are there events within your community that are built around drinking as a form of entertainment, such as beer blasts and keg parties?

❒ Is alcohol education part of elementary and secondary school curricula in your community?

❒ Is teen drinking considered a "safe" alternative to other drug use?

❒ How many establishments are there within walking distance of your home where alcohol can be purchased?

❒ During a single day, how many messages—including TV commercials, print ads, billboards, and such—selling alcohol do you see? How many pro-health messages do you see?

Your answers to these questions will reveal the message patterns you and your community give to young people about alcohol. An important question to consider is...

❒ Are your community's attitudes, actions, and patterns of behavior concerning alcohol providing tacit approval of underage drinking?

And a second important question is...

❒ If the answer is YES, what can you do about it?

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Examples of Negative Norms

During this phase of your local effort, you will create a communitywide initiative that seeks to change a community norm or norms–those that encourage teen drinking. We will call these norms "negative norms."

Communitywide prevention best describes your goal. Communitywide prevention is the systematic application of prevention strategies–strategies that prevent the of alcohol and other drugs by young people throughout a community in a sustained, integrated approach that involves many groups and institutions. These groups include families, tribes, schools, workplaces, media, the religious community, businesses, and community organizations. Such a collaborative effort not only ensures knowledge of and sensitivity toward all facets of your community, it also gives you access to the resources of all community groups.

The following are examples of norms that may exist within your community and ways in which your community can change.

Norm

Enforcement of the 21-year-old drinking age is lax.

Action

Contact your local police, enforcement agency, Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) board, and local elected officials to express your concerns. Suggest ways in which enforcement could be tightened, such as requiring double ID, conducting surveillance operations, educating vendors and servers, or imposing stiff fines on businesses that sell to youth and on youth who purchase. Your job will be to convince the police and other enforcement officials of the urgency of stricter enforcement and that the community will support such enforcement.

Norm

Young people are bombarded with messages in which drinking can appear enticing to them.

Actions

- Convene a meeting with the alcohol producers, distributors, advertisers, and vendors doing business within your community. Voice your concern regarding their targeting of young people with their consumption messages. Ask for their support and demonstrate the support you have within the community. Remember, there is strength in numbers.
- Attempt to counteract the volume of alcohol advertising with prohealth and safety messages targeted to young people. Speak to them in their language and through appropriate channels. Recruit the assistance of the local media, which can donate free space and time for public service messages encouraging healthy lifestyle choices by young people.

Norm

Keg parties are a popular form of entertainment for young people and often lead to drinking and driving by teenagers.

Action

Contact your local police, enforcement agency, and ABC board to express your concerns. Suggest that all vendors be required to tag their kegs and record the purchaser. Request that police conduct impaired driving checkpoints in areas where keg parties are known to take place. Educate parents concerning the dangers of keg parties and potential host liabilities.

Norm

Young people learn about alcohol from unreliable sources and do not know that alcohol is a drug.

Action

Work with your local board of education and school administration to ensure that sufficient quality alcohol education is provided for all students, beginning in elementary school and continuing through high school. Sample curricula and educational materials are available from CSAP's National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and Drug Information as well as from other prevention organizations.

Norm

Alcohol, particularly wine coolers, is often packaged to look like soft drinks and appears to be marketed directly to young people.

Action

Work with your network members to raise community-wide concern about alcohol marketing practices that specifically appeal to young people. Meet with local representatives of the industry to stress to them the community's concern. Some communities have been very vocal in expressing concern about marketing and packaging practices.

Norm

Alcohol is easily accessible to young people in the community. Convenience stores and sports and music events are places for youth to purchase alcohol particularly easily.

Action

Work with your local law enforcement agency and State or local ABC board to strengthen their enforcement efforts. Work through outreach to the news media and letter-writing campaigns to convince local officials that the community wants more resources put toward the enforcement of the 21-year-old drinking age. Inform the community through the mass media about specific local consequences of teen drinking.

In partnership with the local business community, sponsor training programs for salespeople and servers designed to help them identify underage persons.

Encourage local businesses to create policies that reprimand employees who carelessly sell alcohol to minors. Recognize businesses that are careful not to sell to youth.

Increasing the Community's Knowledge of the Underage Drinking Problem

As discussed earlier, a whole community creates an environment that encourages or discourages underage drinking; therefore, a whole community must be involved in changing the environment in ways that will encourage young people to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Any effort to create public awareness requires going through multiple stages. Numerous tools may be employed.

Once you have succeeded in increasing public awareness of underage drinking issues, your next public communication goal will be to motivate community members to take action, to be part of the solution. These persuasion goals can range from fairly simple to very ambitious.

Communicating ideas and messages will be your primary tool in raising awareness and motivating action. Communication itself can take numerous forms. It may be a billboard, a radio public service announcement, or face-to-face interaction through a school or community organization. It may be written or verbal and designed for a small group, large group, or one-on-one audience.

Strategies for this first stage of your public awareness effort might be to...

❒ Conduct an opinionnaire to determine existing attitudes and priorities. (See example in the *Community Risk Assessment Guide.*)

❒ Raise general public understanding that alcohol is an addicting and potentially lethal drug. Raise the same understanding among young people.

❒ Raise general public understanding of the role that community norms and accepted community standards can play in encouraging or discouraging underage drinking.

❒ Raise the general public's awareness of the specific community norms or standards that are contributing to an underage drinking problem in your community (for example, not prosecuting young drinking drivers, serving alcohol to high school students in private homes, failing to provide drug-free places for youth to socialize).

For example, you may want to suggest that...

❒ A teacher discuss with his or her class the fact that alcohol is a drug.

❒ A parent have a lengthy discussion about drinking with his or her children.

❒ A convenience store owner remind all of his or her clerks about the store's policy to carefully check the identification of anyone purchasing alcohol who looks younger than 30 years of age.

❒ A citizens' group call for more police enforcement of the 21-year-old drinking age.

Your communication mechanisms can be as diverse as your community itself and as creative as your own imagination. There are, however, a few simple rules of good communication that you should remember:

- Know your audience and tailor your communication to them. No community is totally homogeneous. Speak to people in their own language and about things that matter to them!
- Have a clear, consistent message. Pretest your message with a sample of your target audience before it is finalized. All your campaign components should complement and reinforce each another.
- Remember frequency and duration–the effectiveness of any communication program builds over time with repeated messages.
- Communicate desired action–if there is an action you think the audience should be taking, tell them so.
- Use multipliers–ask community leaders and organizations to help communicate your message to their constituencies. People are always more receptive to a message when it is delivered through a channel they know and trust.

News Media Can Play a Large Role in Delivering Your Message

The news media can deliver a message to vast numbers of people within a community. They are critical partners in your effort to raise public awareness of the underage drinking issue. Learning what works in a publicity campaign will greatly increase the chances of successfully placing your message with the right media outlets: those that reach and have credibility with your target audiences.

Informing the public is the purpose of the news media; in fact, that will be a shared goal of both the media and your program. Your challenge will be to deliver to the news media information on the size and seriousness of the teen drinking problem and how community norms and standards can encourage or diminish the problem.

Catching Media Attention

The information you present to the news media must be timely and significant—in other words, newsworthy. The list below includes some activities that your group may be part of that could generate news.

❒ Your work on the CSAP Teen Drinking Prevention Program is news in itself. Announce your program's creation and subsequent activities to the news media.

❒ Once your Community Risk Assessment has been completed, frame your message based on your findings. Communicate those findings to the news media.

❒ Initiate stories about the serious consequences associated with teen drinking when the local town council, county board of supervisors, or even the State legislature is considering a bill that relates to underage drinking. Relate the program or campaign goal to a recent drinking or drinking and driving tragedy that has taken place within the community, or connect an upcoming holiday with the predictable rise in drinking-related auto crashes.

❒ Localize the issue. Relate a national policy initiative or comparative statistics to what is happening in your community. Quote local elected or community leaders. Relate human interest stories involving local residents. (Unfortunately, these stories are often human tragedies.)

Making Contact With Reporters and Editors

The press release is the most common method of communicating with journalists. It is the publicist's basic tool and is designed to interest the media in learning more about an event and/or covering an issue or topic. However, large media operations receive hundreds of press releases every day. To ensure that yours is read, you must use the style and format the media prefers.

Other ways to communicate with journalists include pitch letters—letters that introduce an organization or topic to the reporter—phone calls, and press conferences. Use pitch letters and phone calls frequently; reserve the press conference for a truly newsworthy event.

A word about phone calls to reporters: News reporters are extremely busy people, especially when working against a tight deadline, but you may be able to interest them in your story by phone. Collect your facts before you call and get

Suggestions for Writing Press Releases

❒ Begin with the most important facts. The first one or two paragraphs (called the lead) should present the who, what, when, where, why, and how. In other words, get to the point immediately. The rest of the release should be written in an *inverted pyramid* format, with the most important information coming first, least important details held until the end. Most releases are between four and six paragraphs and certainly no longer than two pages.

❒ Accuracy is critical. Check your facts and make sure that such things as names, dates, and titles are correct.

❒ Use short sentences and paragraphs. Be brief.

❒ Write factually and objectively—avoid editorializing and overusing adjectives.

❒ Be sure to quote local officials and include local examples and initiatives and the like. The local angle is your strongest selling point with local media.

❒ Avoid using acronyms as much as possible. If you do use them, make sure they are defined (written out) in the first reference.

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to the point quickly. It is often wise to learn a reporter's deadline—usually late afternoon—and avoid calling then.

News Conferences

A news conference can be an excellent mechanism for communicating a news event to a large number of reporters at one time; however, calling a news conference and having no reporters show up is like throwing a party and having no one come. Call a news conference only when you have something important (i.e., newsworthy) to announce, and involve a local official or celebrity who will attract news coverage.

If you decide to hold a news conference, notify all media within your market three to five days before the event. News conferences are best held in the morning or *early* afternoon to accommodate reporters' deadlines.

Holding an event during which you announce your program to the community can be extremely effective in generating news coverage, especially in small- and medium-sized media markets. Such an event could be a traditional press event or something more creative and, if you hope to have TV coverage, more visual.

Possible Events

❒ Local officials visiting a local prevention agency and discussing the problem with young people there.

❒ A "Sign-In" where young people gather in a park, town square, or other public place to sign a no-use pledge.

❒ Alcohol- and other drug-free dances, festivals, picnics, and the like.

❒ A teen town hall meeting where teens discuss the issue of underage drinking and suggest solutions.

Preparing for the Role of Media Spokesperson

Every organization has someone designated to speak to the news media. This role may sound intimidating, but it does not have to be. The secret to successfully representing your organization to the news media is preparation.

To Prepare for a Media Interview

❒ Learn as much as you can about the report, show, or publication for which you will be interviewed. In the case of a radio or TV show interview, tape and study previous shows. In the case of a print interview, read the reporter's earlier work.

❒ Consider what you would like the audience to learn about teen drinking from you. Decide what you want to say and how to best say it. Write these points out and study them. Remember, media time and space are limited—get to the point quickly.

❒ Several days before the interview, send the reporter background information to assist with preparation. Your biography or resume should be included.

❒ Become familiar with teen drinking statistics—both national and local. Frame them creatively.

❒ Be able to discuss alcohol industry marketing practices and what you would like to see in the way of health-fostering ads for youth.

❒ From the time you greet the reporter until the time you say good-bye, assume that EVERYTHING you say is on the record and may be used in the story!

❒ Make sure the reporter knows where to reach you if he or she has further questions or needs clarification.

Targeting Messages and Audiences, Selecting Media Outlets, and Building Media Lists

Competition for media space and the public's attention is keen. To successfully deliver your message, you must carefully target your message for both the media and the audience.

Begin by identifying those groups of people you want to reach and which media and messages will best persuade them. Some audiences, prevention professionals or beverage vendors, for example, will have specific media targeted to them—frequently newsletters. Other audiences, such as suburban parents, may not have specific media, but viewer and readership studies will tell you about their media-watching and reading habits.

People pay attention to those messages that support their preexisting values and needs, mes-

sages that seem to be speaking directly to them. In localizing national products and themes, it is critical to consider your local audiences. What are their values and concerns? If you recruit a local figure or official to be a spokesperson for the program, select one who will be recognized, accessible, and credible to your target audiences. That may require having more than one spokesperson.

Media outlets and media markets come in all shapes and sizes. We all know of the traditional daily newspapers and evening news programs on TV, but there are numerous other types of media outlets that can be critical to the success of your local campaign.

The size of your media market will in large part determine what media will work best for you. It is generally easier to attract news coverage, especially TV coverage, in smaller cities than in larger ones. In a large, very competitive media market, pursuing radio and print coverage will probably pay bigger dividends than TV.

Several media directories listing all outlets within a market are published, and most public libraries have copies of such directories. Your media list should include assignment editors at newspapers and radio and TV producers and reporters who regularly cover such topics as city hall, education, public safety, health, youth, and the like.

Building a good media list will be a time-consuming process. Before beginning, check with the mayor's office or local prevention agency to see if they already have a local media list and will allow you to use it. If you need to build your own list, putting it into a computer database or on a word processing system will simplify the process of generating address labels for multiple mailings. The ability to sort your list (i.e., by radio news directors, editorial writers, talk show producers, etc.) will also help you target your mailings.

In building your media list, consider the following outlets:

- ❒ Weekly newspapers
- ❒ Free newspapers
- ❒ Supplements to major metropolitan newspapers, including Sunday magazines, calendar sections, suburban editions, and the like
- ❒ TV public affairs programming and talk shows
- ❒ Cable TV news and public affairs programming
- ❒ Cable TV community bulletin boards
- ❒ Radio stations, especially all-news format stations.
- ❒ School newspapers–high school and college
- ❒ Wire services and news syndicates

You may even want to get your messages on electronic bulletin boards. Think creatively!

Public Service Announcements

Public service announcements (PSAs) are advertising time and space given free to an issue or cause. In the past, radio and TV stations were obligated by law to provide a specific number of hours per month to public service messages. For the most part, these requirements no longer exist but most stations still recognize the importance of public service advertising and give time to PSAs. However, because of the tremendous competition for this PSA time, your message must be well presented to the media and well targeted to the audience.

The format in which the PSA is prepared is extremely important. A TV PSA may be a completed piece of video 15 or 30 seconds long–such spots can be very effective, but are also expensive to produce. A second type of TV PSA is a visual element with narrative copy, which is much less expensive to produce.

Radio stations are an attractive outlet for PSAs. Radio is far more flexible and lends itself to live-copy PSA scripts that are usually read by the on-air personality as time permits.

The appendix to the *Communicator's Guide* is a Radio Public Service Guide designed to be distributed to public service directors at stations throughout your community. It contains sample public service announcements on underage drinking.

Summing Up

Finally, supplement your campaign with person-to-person and community activities.

The combination of a media message plus specific activities that people can become involved in will be more effective than either one alone. Personal involvement increases the likelihood that the program will be perceived as important and will increase the program's opportunity to influence people's attitudes and behavior. Suggested talking points that members of your organization can follow in making presentations and spreading the message are the final component of this section.

Foundations of a Successful Media Campaign

❒ Know your audience and target your message.

❒ Know the media. Select the outlet that reaches the audience you need to reach!

❒ Get the media the information they want, at the time they need it, and in a format they can use.

❒ Remember frequency and duration—the effectiveness of any communication program builds over time with repeated messages.

❒ Have a consistent and clear message—all campaign components should complement and reinforce one another.

❒ Communicate desired actions—tell the audience what you want them to do.

Suggested Talking Points

❒ Underage drinking is a serious national problem. At least 8 million young people drink alcoholic beverages every week, and nearly one-half million are binge drinkers—consuming five or more drinks in a row.

❒ Alcohol-related traffic crashes are the leading cause of death and injury among teenagers. Alcohol is also associated with poor performance in school, truancy, date rape, AIDS, unwanted pregnancy, drowning, fights, assaults, and vandalism.

❒ Because of loopholes and lax enforcement, the 21-year-old drinking age law is largely a myth. Most teenagers get their alcohol the easy way: They walk into a store and buy it.

❒ Young people are for the most part grossly misinformed about the effect of alcohol and even have trouble differentiating between alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages.

❒ Delaying the age of first use of alcohol beyond the adolescent years protects the individual for that time and reduces the risk of alcohol and other drug problems later.

❒ The (name of city) Teen Drinking Prevention Program will create a grassroots campaign to identify those community norms that encourage teen drinking and target those norms for change.

❒ The goal of our program is to create healthy environments for our young people and encourage them to make healthy lifestyle choices—which include declining to use alcohol.

Using special events to deliver prohealth and safety messages or, if necessary, modifying events is an important component of the Teen Drinking Prevention Program. Combining healthy lifestyle choices with a community event is an excellent way to communicate your message to the hundreds or thousands of people who will attend. To be compatible with your prohealth message, however, some events may have to change their focus. The goal of modifying an event is to ensure that it encourages healthy lifestyle choices for all participants, but especially for young people.

Special events abound in most communities and can be fun for families and help build community spirit. Unfortunately, such events are, for young people within the community, too often an easy opportunity to drink alcohol. To achieve healthful special events within your community, you will have to work closely with event organizers and sponsors. You will have to increase the awareness of event organizers of the underage drinking potential at the event, work with them to establish event policies and procedures to curtail this access, and incorporate your underage no-use message into the event's overall publicity and visibility.

Many organizations, groups, and businesses use special events to deliver their message to target audiences. Events are particularly effective communication mechanisms, because they are often themselves specifically targeted to a group of people or a geographic area. The alcohol industry is a very active player in the world of special events, funding many every year.

Special events are used to deliver messages in numerous ways, including pre-event publicity, such as advertising, TV community service announcements, billboards, posters, and flyers. The event itself often generates news coverage that garners additional visibility for the sponsor. The sponsor's name is also visible at activities that take place during the event, such as performances, band concerts, contests, remote radio broadcasts, souvenir giveaways, signage, and program guides.

As you can see, there are many good reasons sponsors choose to lend their financial support to an event. They want to be associated with a community event, and they like the visibility. However, an argument you can use to convince event sponsors of the soundness of assisting you in delivering healthy messages to participants is the number of things that sponsors do *not* want to be associated with, such as

- Promoting underage drinking.
- Promoting irresponsible drinking and its costly consequences.
- Breaking State and local laws.

In building a relationship with event organizers, it is beneficial to understand their overall goals for the event—and relate your positive, prohealth message in a way that helps organizers reach their goals.

Special events are as varied as our communities. They include...

- ❒ Festivals
- ❒ Fairs
- ❒ Parades
- ❒ Rallies
- ❒ Shows
- ❒ Sports activities
- ❒ Rodeos
- ❒ Powwows
- ❒ Fiestas
- ❒ Block parties
- ❒ Carnivals

Goals of most special events are...

- ❒ Strong attendance
- ❒ A safe environment for all participants
- ❒ A good time for all participants
- ❒ Delivering the audience the sponsor wants to reach
- ❒ A positive community image
- ❒ Responding to community needs and concerns
- ❒ Entertaining and exciting features and programs

Identify a Community Event

With your needs assessment or other foundation research, you should have identified those special events that take place within your community and familiarized yourself with their audiences and messages.

Your first step will be to select a special event with which you want to integrate your message. Be sure that the event does not also communicate a conflicting or mixed message—such as using alcohol in high-risk sporting events.

You should meet with event organizers early in your campaign. Do your homework in preparation for this meeting; know the event, its participants, and its goals. It will be your job to convince the organizers that the event will be a better one for them, for the sponsors, and for the community with healthy messages and policies. Offer your assistance in making the event a safer, more positive one for the community. Asking an event organizer to participate in your campaign's advisory council is a good way to start to build this positive relationship.

Propose to event organizers a few changes to make the event safer:

- ❒ Decrease the onsite visibility of alcoholic beverages and promotions.
- ❒ Tighten serving procedures to ensure that persons under 21 years of age are not being served.
- ❒ Ensure that nonalcoholic beverages are readily available.
- ❒ Promote healthy teen lifestyles and entertainment choices.
- ❒ Offer the talents of teen performance groups for onsite entertainment.
- ❒ Set up a mini-health fair to promote good health habits.
- ❒ Consider being an event sponsor, thus incorporating the no-use message into all the event materials.

Evaluation is an essential part of any prevention program. In our case, it is a means of studying and quantifying the value of certain approaches to teen drinking prevention. In evaluating the work done in your community, you can help communities across the country learn how to create healthful environments for their young people.

Evaluating your efforts helps you identify your successes and failures. Knowing which strategies were most effective with specific audiences will allow you to plan and implement stronger prevention programs in the future. It is also important to remember that evaluation not only helps program planners with their next project, but can help you keep your present project on course. Having an evaluation process in place also allows you to "check your course" in the middle of the program and make corrections that will improve your overall outcome.

Your evaluation plan should investigate the strategy, implementation, outcome, and impact of your campaign. Your evaluation process should allow you to...

❒ Document the activities and accomplishments of the program—number of activities held, number of persons served, news media coverage, and so on.

❒ Measure the degree to which the goals and objectives of the program were achieved.

❒ Determine whether target audiences were reached and measure the impact of the message on the audience. For example, did the target audience's attitude concerning youth and alcohol change? Did their actions concerning youth and alcohol change?

❒ Determine which strategies worked and which did not generally and with which specific audiences. For example, did groups within communities or subcommunities institute changes as a result of heightened awareness about underage drinking?

❒ Determine to what extent the program used all the resources available to it. Did your program seek to find additional resources as it progressed?

Sources of supplemental funding you receive may also require an evaluation and will appreciate this evidence that their dollars were used productively.

The development of your evaluation process really begins much earlier, during the needs assessment phase of your campaign. During the needs assessment phase, you ask who your target audiences are and uncover their attitudes and actions concerning underage drinking. This baseline data will be critical to you in measuring the impact of your communications effort. During the evaluation phase, you ask if you reached those audiences, what message they received, and how they acted on the message, if at all.

Your evaluation points should closely mirror your project goals and objectives. Each goal or objective must be followed up with the question, "Did we achieve what we set out to achieve?" The more specific the goal, the easier it will be to answer this question.

Use your evaluation data to publicize the successes of your efforts. For more information on program planning, implementing and evaluation, contact NCADI.

Evaluation instruments you may want to consider using include...

❒ Surveys—question the target audience directly to see if their knowledge, attitudes, or actions have been influenced by the program.

❒ News media monitoring—collecting "clips" (both print and electronic) of news media coverage of the teen drinking issue and your program to help you gauge the effectiveness of your media relations effort.

❒ Focus groups and interviews—meet with members of the target audiences, either one-on-one or in small groups, to determine the influence and effectiveness of your program.

❒ Other ongoing data collection—other organizations within your community may have ongoing data-collection systems that will provide information to assist you in evaluating your program's effectiveness. For example, your local school system may take annual surveys regarding students' attitudes toward and their use of alcohol and other drugs; local law enforcement and beverage control authorities may also have relevant data.

CSAP Support Materials

CSAP has created a variety of materials to support communities in their prevention efforts. These materials were developed in consultation with the eight lead cities where this program was pilot tested and are appropriate either for immediate use in your community or for adaptation.

The Teen Drinking Prevention Program Kit is available through CSAP's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (800-729-6686).

Guide to Program Materials

A book that outlines each of the program's products and identifies its intended audiences and uses. The program's prevention products are designed for use by many people and groups, including prevention program leaders, the media, law enforcement officials, event organizers, and youth themselves, within any community.

Law Enforcement Action Guide

The *Law Enforcement Action Guide* is targeted to enforcement and police officials. This guide demonstrates the important role these officials play in the prevention of underage drinking and includes proven enforcement methods that are working in communities across the country.

Event Action Guide

The *Event Action Guide* shows event organizers how to build support for and host alcohol-free events, which are safer for the community and may be enjoyed by all.

Teen Action Guide

The Teen Action Guide is written for youth. This guide shows young people the important role they can play in influencing their peers to make healthy lifestyle choices. It suggests prevention activities for young people.

Community Risk Assessment Guide

The *Community Risk Assessment Guide* is designed to help communities review their norms and standards and assess the degree to which those norms encourage or discourage underage drinking. The guide includes an opinionnaire and a community audit. The information gathered by these documents can help determine the need and appropriate strategies for a community's prevention effort.

Communicator's Guide

The *Communicator's Guide* is a booklet of artwork, public service announcements, advertisements, letters, and news stories that program planners can reproduce directly or tailor for local or issue-specific use.

Parents Reference Card

This 8 1/2 X 11, two-sided card is specifically designed for parents. It illustrates the important role that parents must play in preventing underage drinking and provides them with tips on how to positively steer their children away from alcohol.

The card also encourages parents to initiate prevention activities in the community that will reduce the problems associated with teen drinking.

Poster

A poster designed to help program organizers educate other members of the community about underage drinking. It may be displayed in homes, schools, recreation centers, places of worship, and so on.

Order any or all of these products today. With them, your community can join the others across the country that are proving our theme—Prevention WORKS!

For more information about alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse prevention, contact the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20847-2345, 1-800-729-6686, 301-468-2600, or TDD 1-800-487-4889.

Teen Drinking Prevention Program

Community Action Guide

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

SAMHSA